



Chieftain

VOLUME 53, NUMBER 5 ITAWAMBA COMMUNITY COLLEGE MARCH 25, 2024

50 YEARS



ICC continues to elevate student experience with Connection Center

Staff Reports

Plans to elevate the ICC Experience continue with the announcement of the construction of The Connection Center, a multi-use conference center space and a Chick-fil-A on the Fulton Campus.

COMING IN SPRING 2026

According to Tyler Camp, Chief of Staff, the facility, which will be built on the front portion of the Band Hall parking lot, is expected to open during the 2026 spring semester.

Following the announcement, Camp said that initial estimates for the project have been received, but bids

will be accepted within the next 45 days. Capital from unexpended plant allocations or local monies with an injection of funds from Sodexo, ICC's dining service provider, which will operate Chick-fil-A, will be used for construction of the facility.

EXPERIENCE EXPANSION

"We have been in negotiations with Sodexo and Chick-fil-A over the past three years," Camp said. "We are continuously looking at ways to expand our experiences for our students, employees and the communities that we serve. CFA is a household name and exemplifies the customer service and

experience we always strive for at ICC. We also knew CFA was something the local Fulton community needed in its rolodex of food options."

THE FACILITY

The 9,900-square-foot facility will include approximately 6,200-square feet for the multi-use meeting space and roughly 3,000-square-feet for the Chick-fil-A. "The Chick-fil-A will look, feel and operate as a traditional CFA," Camp said. "It will have inside seating for approximately 80 and a covered outside area." There will be no drive-thru.

The meeting space can be config-

ured as one large room or two smaller ones. It will include all presentation AV, modular tables and chairs and a catering prep kitchen that services the space.

WHO WILL USE IT?

"Ideally, this will become the new hub for community meetings, sessions and small events by both on-and off-campus groups," Camp noted. "Our Student Activities team will be able to use the space for some programming events, and CFA can provide catering for events onsite." Its hours will be the same as traditional Chick-fil-A restaurants.



For the latest news updates
.....
See
www.iccms.edu



Inside

Viewpoints
News
Sports



VIEWPOINT
KYLE TRAYLOR
Chieftain Staff

Be grateful
for where you stand

Since I was a child, I always thought I would go to school, major in journalism and be the next great commentator.

Throughout my high school career, this was my focus, and I knew I would eventually get my degree in journalism. It just felt right.

Even my journalism teacher helped me start a podcast for the school, and I was a commentator for games. Everything was leading to fulfilling my dream.

Fast forward to my freshman year of college. I started to realize that there are a lot more options out there than journalism, and I needed to look for my best option as well. I was then introduced to IMC (Integrated Marketing Communications) and decided it might be something I could switch

to in the future. It is similar to journalism since a major part of it is communication. Journalism has an aspect of social media and content creation that is a bigger focus in IMC. That is something I am interested in and would like to pursue when I transfer to Ole Miss. So, now as a sophomore and about to be a junior, it looks like I will be changing my major.

I say all this to push those who might not know what they want to do and feel they picked the wrong major. It's not too late! Try something new. We have wonderful advisers at ICC who are here to help you. It's their job to assist you with finding the right path.

ICC also invites many universities to share their different programs and opportunities throughout the year. Don't be afraid to ask about them and take a look at different options.

For those who know they want to change already, don't think it's too late. Many people change their second year, and I personally know people who have changed their majors three or four times.

It should be noted, though, that changing your major on a "whim" isn't the smartest idea. It should be a process that is well-thought-out and looked into.

While changing your major is easy, certain classes won't carry over to your new major. To make sure you pick the right thing, try exploring careers.

Taking a career inventory test is an awesome way to find out your interests. You may also find there are other options inside the major you choose that you had no idea you could do, possibly ensuring that the hours you already have accumulated can carry over and apply to your new major and life journey.

Don't forget to connect with either your adviser or one of those in the Career/Counseling Center. I promise you that they have seen it all, but because of them, other students have succeeded and have become their very BEST...just as you can.



OPINION
POLL

“
What is
the
greatest
challenge
you,
as a
college
student,
face
today?
”

ALEA HUDSON
Chieftain Staff

“Avoiding distractions. Having to tell my friends no to going out, but I must stay in, and study is hard” -
Jacorious Turner,
sophomore, Columbus

“Going to sleep on time.” - Cedric Kimbrough, sophomore, Tupelo

“Waking up early for clinicals.” - Chase Gray, sophomore, West Point

“Avoiding bad influences; there's so many different ways to get off track while in college realizing what is good for me and what is not is a lot harder than people think.” - Myrie Dav-enport, freshman, West Point

“Finding a balance between academics, socialization and campus involvement to ensure efficient management.” - Whitt Willis, sophomore, Madison

“Finding time to get things done. Time management is not stressed enough in preparation for college. A planner is necessary.” - Nikolas Davis, freshman, Fulton

“The stress of having to remember tests and assignment due dates, studying the right amount of time for each class and still enjoying the college experience. It gets stressful.” - Cross-land Malone, freshman, Pontotoc

“Waking up for 8 a.m. classes. I dread hearing my alarm every morning since it means I have to leave the comfort of my bed.” - Amiya Terry, freshman, New Albany

“Funding scholarships and grants are a blessing to students attending college, but for those of us that don't have those available, paying for college is very difficult.” - Amber Miller, sophomore, Louisville

VIEWPOINT
Chieftain Adviser
DONNA THOMAS

It's never too late
for these tips...

1. The Freshman 15 does exist. So does the Freshman 20. Watch how many starches and processed foods you are eating.
2. Pizza. See No. 1.
3. If it's take out a loan or quit school, take out a loan.
4. If you can live harmoniously with someone in a 20x20 foot space, you can do anything.
5. Flip-flops. Wear them in the dorm shower. Always.
6. Always attend the “real class” and use the internet one for review.
7. If you are not a morning person, don't schedule classes for 8 a.m. You will not go.
8. Get involved. All work and no “productive” socializing is boring.
9. Too much socializing = bad grades. Everything in moderation.
10. If you are feeling overwhelmed, are having problems sleeping or have gone through a breakup, visit your college's counseling center. If you are feeling suicidal at any point, call your college's crisis center number of call 911 immediately.
11. There are a lot of activities at the college. Take advantage of them.
12. Take advantage of free tutoring.
13. Sit near the front of the class.
14. Attend the whole class. Even if you feel like you will just die if you sit there any longer. Even if you feel your brain start to ooze out the side of your ear. Because instructors sometimes give really important information at the end of class.
15. Recopy your notes after class. Or, if you've typed them, do a quick read-through after class.
16. Don't do anything stupid, it will go down on your permanent record. Seriously. At every college you apply to after this one.
17. Register for classes as early as possible.
18. The student bookstore (online and store) can have great student discounts.
19. Use the college's career resource center - not just when you are going to graduate, but when you are figuring out what you want to do with your life. It's a free service.
20. If you have a tendency to be messy, your roommate may be compulsively neat.
21. You may feel like your parents are hovering too much. Look at it this way. They've been taking care of you since you were a baby. That doesn't just stop. Cut them some slack.
22. Use flashcards to quiz yourself when you study.
23. You may not know what to do for a major. It's okay. There are people much older than you that still aren't sure what they want to do with their lives. That's okay. See your academic adviser for help. Pay attention to which classes you really look forward to - that can be a clue as to what you might want to major in.

- Adapted from Psychology Today,
Stephanie A. Serkis, Ph.D., August 23,
2010

Chieftain 50

Staff Writers.....Shelby Franks,
Kenna Grant, Alea Hudson, ZaMarion Jones,
Mathius Mallard, Mackenzie Sneed, Kyle Traylor

Sports Editor.....Elijah Coleman

Adviser.....Donna Thomas

Sports Information.....Adam Gore
Cal Brown

Photographers.....C.J. Adams
Nina Strother

The Chieftain is available online only and is posted three times each semester.

Views expressed in this newspaper are not necessarily those of the faculty and administration.

Itawamba Community College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate's degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404.679.4500 for questions about the accreditation of Itawamba Community College.

Itawamba Community College is an equal opportunity institution. The College strictly prohibits discrimination in its educational programs and activities, employment practices and admissions processes on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, ethnicity, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran or other status protected by applicable law. For more information, contact the Vice President of Student Services, 602 West Hill Street, Fulton, MS 38843, 662.862.8271, or email TitleIXCoordinator@iccms.edu.



Faculty SPOTLIGHT

DR. LAURIE MCBRIDE

Speech and Theatre Instructor

FAMILY: “My husband, Mitch, and I moved to Fulton seven years ago, when I started working at ICC. Prior to then, we had lived in Booneville.”

EDUCATION: B.S. degree (secondary education), English, Tennessee Temple University; M.A., Interpretative Speech/Theatre, Bob Jones University; D.A., English, The University of Mississippi; further communication study, Mississippi State University

WHAT DO YOU CURRENTLY TEACH OR HAVE TAUGHT: *Public Speaking and Theatre Appreciation. Also direct the spring play.*

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF TEACHING: “I love helping students ‘come out of their shell’ and share their thoughts with their peers. I always enjoy having former students come up to me at random places, like the mall or a restaurant, and say, ‘I don’t know if you remember me, but I took your speech class, and it helped so much. I also enjoy seeing students express themselves creatively - both on stage and behind the scenes in a production.’”



NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF TEACHING: “Ultimately, students are responsible for turning in assignments and doing their best in class. When a student with great capability does not put in much effort, I feel sad, but hopefully, the negative consequences of their actions (or lack of work) will teach them important life lessons in the future.”

WORDS OF ADVICE FOR FUTURE STUDENTS: “Do your best! Don’t give a half-hearted effort.”

FUN FACTS: “At Corinth Theatre-Arts, I once played Baroness Von Schrader in *The Sound of Music* - a rich woman who was engaged to Captain Von Trapp. When our engagement ended in the play, I immediately had to help the actress playing Maria (his new attraction), put on her dress for the next scene. While volunteering at Corinth-Theatre, I was a featured extra in the movie - *Cookie’s Fortune* (filmed in Holly Springs) - with Julianne Moore, Glenn Close, Chris O’Donnell, Courtney Vance, Donald Moffitt and Ned Beatty. They kept in a few of my whispered lines, and I have a few close-up shots. It was a fun four-day experience in the movie industry.”

MATHAIUS MALLARD
Chieftain Staff

Happy Easter!



Anna Beth Brown, Whit Willis

Mr. and Miss ICC Whit Willis, Anna Beth Brown

Staff Reports

Whitt Willis of Madison and Anna Beth Brown of Pontotoc have been elected Mr. and Miss Itawamba Community College for 2023-24.

Brown is a member of the ICC Indian Delegation, Baptist Student Union, Student Government Association; Fashion Tribe executive; Community Relations volunteer and member of the cast of “Ripcord,” last year’s theatre spring production. Her volunteer service includes Journey Camp counselor, Pontotoc Junior Auxiliary Juniores, Fredonia Baptist Church and St. Jude 5k. She works

at her family’s business. A graduate of North Pontotoc High School. Brown plans to earn a degree in biology at Mississippi State University and then transfer to a Physician’s Assistant School. She is the daughter of Jackie and Angela Brown.

At ICC, Willis, who is a graduate of Amory High School, is president of the Student Government Association and a member of the Academic Calendar, Financial Aid and Curriculum committees and Student Activities Board; Orientation Leader, Food Pantry Representative, Natural Science Instructional Support Tutor; and

a member of the STEM Club, PEAK Club, Humanities Club, Honors College, Phi Theta Kappa and Sigma Kappa Delta and former Student Activities student worker. His honors include President’s List (fall 2022-fall 2023) and Academic Hall of Fame. Willis volunteers at the University of Mississippi Medical Center and for the Jackson Free Clinic. He plans to transfer to Mississippi State University to earn a degree in microbiology and to enter medical school to prepare for a career as a Family Medicine Physician. He is the son of Walt and Susan Willis.

ICC’s Butler selected prestigious Guistwhite Scholar

Staff Reports

Matthew L. Butler of Tupelo, a student at Itawamba Community College, is one of eight Phi Theta Kappa members selected as a 2024 Guistwhite Scholar and will receive a \$5,000 scholarship for baccalaureate studies.

Butler, who is a biochemistry major, is participating in the Middle College program. He will graduate from both Tupelo High School and ICC in May. His ICC activities include vice president of Scholarship for the Upsilon Sigma Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, Instructional Support team member, 22-23 Monroe County Representative for the Tupelo Student Government Association, STEM Club president, Exam Cram tutor and member of the Humanities Club. His honors include president’s list and recipient of the PTK Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise scholarship in 2023. Butler’s civic activities include Time for Tupelo, among other local community service events and tutoring.

At Tupelo High School, his activities and honors are Science Olympiad, ACT 30+ Club, Poetry Out Loud State Finalist and National Rural and Small-Town Recognition program. He plans to transfer to Mississippi State University this fall to continue work-



Matthew Butler

ing toward his degree in biochemistry with a focus on pre-research. He is the son of Joyce Butler.

“The Guistwhite scholarship ensures that I can continue being a student leader among my peers without my having to worry about as much financial strain,” Butler said. “Overall, the scholarship is an amazing opportunity for any student willing to go above and beyond for their honor society, and I am honored to receive it.”

Winners were chosen from among 3,000 applicants nationwide, and their selection was based on academic excellence, leadership accomplishments and engagement in PTK programs.

They will also receive a commemorative medallion.

This is the second-highest scholarship offered by Phi Theta Kappa. It is named in honor of the late Margaret and Dr. Jack Guistwhite, who established the first transfer scholarship designated exclusively for Phi Theta Kappa members to Florida Atlantic University in 1975.

“What Dr. Guistwhite started nearly 50 years ago has become a transformational force in the lives of PTK members and has resulted in more than 800 colleges and universities designating transfer scholarships for our students,” said PTK President and CEO Dr. Lynn Tinchler-Ladner. “It is fitting that we continue to honor our students who excel in scholarship and leadership as Guistwhite Scholars in celebration of Jack and Margaret.”

Phi Theta Kappa is the premier honor society recognizing academic achievement of students at associate degree-granting colleges and helping them grow as scholars and leaders. The society is made up of more than 3.8 million members and nearly 1,300 chapters in 11 countries with approximately 240,000 active members in the nation’s colleges.



College
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SPRING 2024

- Mar. 26** Registration for currently-enrolled sophomores who have completed 24 or more hours begins at 7:30 a.m.
- Mar. 27** Last day to drop classes with a 'W' through excessive absences or withdrawal from classes for eLearning full-term classes
- Mar. 28** Registration for currently-enrolled freshmen begins at 7:30 a.m.
- Mar. 29** Good Friday holiday for students and employees
- Apr. 1** Good Monday holiday for students and employees
- Apr. 8** First day of class for eLearning second four-week classes
Last day to add eLearning second four-week classes
- Apr. 10** Honors Orientation begins at 1 p.m. (Fulton Campus)
- Apr. 15** First day of registration for re-admission students and transfer students
- Apr. 17** Last day to drop classes with a 'W' through excessive absences or withdrawal from classes for eLearning second eight-week classes
- Apr. 19** Freshman Orientation begins at 8:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. (Fulton Campus)
- Apr. 22-26** Final exams for eLearning full-term classes

ICC SGA officer
election set Apr. 9

KENNA GRANT
Chieftain Staff

Itawamba Community College's Student Government Association officers will be elected during online balloting, Apr. 9.

Students will elect a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer for both the Fulton and Tupelo campuses, according to Maggie Wilkinson, Student Activities coordinator. The Tupelo SGA also represents the Belden Center.

The Student Government Association, also known as SGA, is a student-led organization that is the voice for all students at ICC. According to Wilkinson, members of SGA make decisions on behalf of all students such as advocating for changes to policies at all college locations.

Representatives and those in officer positions learn the importance of leadership and how to be an effective leader to achieve a common goal and reform policies for the betterment of all ICC students, noted Wilkinson. Officers and representatives alike can develop leadership skills and qualities through their involvement in major events. Representatives will be elected in the fall.

Any student at ICC has the opportunity to run for an officer position or become a representative, Wilkinson said. Qualifications include a full-time student and maintain a 2.5 GPA. Involvement in various clubs and organizations is not required, Wilkinson emphasized, but may increase votes during election for students interested in running for office or becoming a representative.

In addition to the officers that will be elected on Apr. 9, there are seven representatives, one for each county (Chickasaw, Itawamba, Lee, Monroe and Pontotoc) and two at-large. Each position includes distinct responsibilities, Wilkinson explained. The president is responsible for creating agendas for meetings, responding to email inquiries and serving on college committees. The vice president serves on college committees, among other duties. The secretary takes notes during meetings as well as serves on college committees. The treasurer is responsible for the financial aspects of the organization and serves on college committees.

Elected students will hold officer positions for one year, but can serve more than one term or serve in more than one office, Wilkinson noted. "SGA officers are more involved and more sensitive to the needs and desires of all ICC students."



Celebrating Tennessee Valley Authority's \$15,000 contribution to Itawamba Community College's School of STEM include, front from left, Reese Griffith of Amory, STEM participant; Dr. Jada Mills, Natural Science division chair and STEM sponsor; Heather McCormick, Mathematics division chair and STEM sponsor; Carolyn Ellis Ward and Chad Wilson, both of TVA; Dr. Jay Allen, ICC president; Ben Moody of Mantachie, STEM participant; Derek McGill, TVA, Bradley Howard, Computer Science division chair and STEM sponsor; Scott Hendrix, Matt Fennell, both of TEPA; Dr. Michelle Clouse, vice president of Instructional Services; and Michael Upton, director of Advancement.

Tennessee Valley Authority donates
\$15,000 to ICC School of STEM;
project includes weather balloon

Staff Reports

Itawamba Community College's School of STEM will benefit from a \$15,000 contribution from the Tennessee Valley Authority.

"Because of TVA's generosity, ICC's students who are majoring in STEM-related areas, can experience a weather balloon experiment and a mobile planetarium, both significant additions to our curriculum and opportunities that will enhance learning," said Dr. Jada Mills, Natural Science division chair and one of three lead contacts for the School of STEM.

TVA'S MISSION

"Our mission at TVA is to improve the lives of those in our region," said Carolyn Ward, Community Relations specialist. "One of the ways we are able to make an impact is funding contributions through our partnership with Tombigbee Electric Power Association, and we are incredibly thankful for their support. We know that STEM learning prepares students to be the workforce of tomorrow - preparing them for steady, good-paying careers that will see them through a lifetime of prosperity right here in Mississippi. I am proud that TVA played a role in bringing STEM exposure to Itawamba Community College, which will help to create a powerful workforce in the future."

The Weather Balloon Research Opportunity will be connected

with Mills' Special Topics in Biology course, and the students will learn how to conduct research. "We hope to have a community event later this spring for final launch as well as another opportunity so STEM students can present their research to others," Mills said.

THE PROJECT

The project includes general information about weather balloons, determining the purpose of the experiment, deploying the weather balloon at the Fulton Campus and collection and analysis of data. Mills said the planetarium STEM opportunity will include STEM Week; afternoon planetarium sessions rotating at all three ICC locations, including Fulton, Tupelo and Belden; STEM camp and a recruiting tool for the School of STEM. "We hope to host community STEM events and allow our STEM students to volunteer, narrate and be part of this exhibit," Mills said. "A large part is sparking an interest in STEM at all age levels."

Currently, STEM at ICC includes the School of STEM, STEM Club and experiential learning Mills noted.

TOMBIGBEE'S ROLE

"Tombigbee for 90 years has been proud to work to better our region and the lives of our members," said Scott Hendrix, chief executive officer for Tombigbee

Electric Power Association. "Certainly, to foster educational opportunities in conjunction with TVA and ICC is a large part of that mission. We hope with grants such as this to enrich the lives of our students and give them science and technology opportunities ultimately encouraging them to stay in our region."

"Itawamba Community College is extremely grateful to the Tennessee Valley Authority and Tombigbee Electric Power Association for this significant contribution that will make a difference in the lives of many of our students who are now able to explore STEM areas and are now seeing evidence of its translation into more majors and more graduates in these fields," said ICC President Dr. Jay Allen. "It will be exciting to see the integration of a weather balloon and planetarium into STEM instruction and activities."

THE BEGINNING

In September 2021, ICC was selected one of the winning colleges in the American Association of Community Colleges' Mentor-Links Advancing Technological Education program, which was the catalyst for beginning STEM activities including utilization of a mentor in establishing an Introduction to STEM Professions course, a STEM Club and STEM Week.



Meeting Room

CLUB NEWS & CALENDAR

PROFESSIONAL/SCHOLARLY

Alpha Delta Nu	alphadeltanu@iccms.edu
Educators Rising	educatorsrising@iccms.edu
Humanities Club	humanitiesclub@iccms.edu
ICC Art Club	artclub@iccms.edu
ICC Honors College	honors@iccms.edu
Legal Education Association	lea@iccms.edu
MOSA	mosa@iccms.edu
Nurses Christian Fellowship	ncf@iccms.edu
PEAK Club	peak@iccms.edu
Phi Theta Kappa	PTKFulton@iccms.edu
	PTKTupelo@iccms.edu
Sigma Kappa Delta	SKD@iccms.edu
Skills USA	skillsusa@iccms.edu
STEM Club	stemclub@iccms.edu
SOTA (Occupational Ther.)	sota@iccms.edu
The Business Council	council@iccms.edu
The Global Experience	travel@iccms.edu

COLLEGE-BASED

Archery Club	archery@iccms.edu
Bass Club	bassclub@iccms.edu
Chieftain (Newspaper)	chieftain@iccms.edu
Disc Golf Club	discgolf@iccms.edu
eSports Club	esports@iccms.edu
Fashion Tribe	fashiontribe@iccms.edu
Indian Delegation	delegate@iccms.edu
MANUP	manup@iccms.edu
Mirror (Yearbook)	mirror@iccms.edu
Orientation Leaders	orientation@iccms.edu
Student Activities Board	SAB@iccms.edu
Student Government Assn.	SGAFulton@iccms.edu
	SGATupelo@iccms.edu

FINE ARTS PERFORMING

All-American Band	band@iccms.edu
CenterStage	centerstage@iccms.edu
Choir and Chamber Singers	choir@iccms.edu
Color Guard	colorguard@iccms.edu
Concert Ensembles	band@iccms.edu
Film Club	filmclub@iccms.edu
Indianettes	indianettes@iccms.edu
Jazz Ensemble	jazz@iccms.edu
Pom Squad	pomsquad@iccms.edu
Steel Drum Band	band@iccms.edu
Theatre Productions	theatre@iccms.edu
Woodwind Ensembles	woodwinds@iccms.edu

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Baptist Student Union	bsu@iccms.edu
Fellowship of Christian	
Athletes	FCA@iccms.edu
Nurses Christian Fellowship	NCF@iccms.edu
Wesley Foundation	wesley@iccms.edu

**For more information
on ICC clubs
and organizations,
www.iccms.edu.**

Bowers earns Hallmark status

Staff Reports

Jenny Bowers of Tupelo, ICC English instructor and Phi Theta Kappa adviser for the Beta Tau Sigma chapter, has been selected as the recipient of a Distinguished Adviser Award from the honor society, to be presented at PTK Catalyst in Orlando, Fla., Apr. 4-6.

The award, which can be received only once, is presented to advisers with at least four or more years of service as of January 10, 2024.

Bowers joined the ICC faculty in 2002 as an adjunct instructor and became full-time in 2011. Also, she has served as Writing Center consultant and director.

She earned both the bachelor's and master's degrees from Mississippi State University. Her PTK awards and honors include the 2024 Outstanding Adviser and Horizon Award Adviser, PTK Mississippi/Louisiana Regional Advisory Board for 2023-25, Five Star Adviser, Bennie Warren Outstanding Adviser for the MS/LA Region (two years) and the Horizon Award for New Advisers. Additional honors include William Winter Scholar for 2022 and National Merit Finalist.

Bowers is a member of Sigma Tau Delta, National English Honorary, and Delta Kappa Gamma, Organization of Women Educators.

She and her husband, Michael, have two children.



Beta Tau Sigma chapter of Phi Theta Kappa recipients of awards at the organization's Mississippi/Louisiana Regional Conference include from left, Dr. Delena Hukle, Serra-Avery Erwin, Will Gibson, Savannah Scruggs, Jenny Bowers and Sennett Watkins.

ICC Phi Theta Kappa chapters receive multiple awards

Staff Reports

Both the Beta Tau Sigma (Tupelo) and Upsilon Sigma (Fulton) chapters of Phi Theta Kappa at Itawamba Community College received multiple awards at the organization's Mississippi/Louisiana Regional Conference, Feb 29-Mar. 1 at William Carey University.

Both chapters were awarded five-star status.

Beta Tau Sigma awards included Jenny Bowers of Tupelo, Outstanding Adviser; Bowers and Dr. Delena Hukle of Mantachie, Horizon award advisers; Serra-Avery Erwin of Tupelo, Golden Key Award; Most Distinguished Chapter finalist; Top 10 and theme finalist for Honors in Action; and Top 10 College Project. The chapter's Honors in Action project, which is research-based, was Theme 6, The Soul of Play. It centered around spoken word performances, Bowers said. Members of the chapter read to ICC's preschool, sponsored a poetry night

at a local coffee house as well as a "write it down, let it go" box in the lobby of the Academic and Student Center. "All of the parts of our project reflected the concept that we use words to play, and



play can be therapeutic," Bowers noted.

The College Project, which is requested by ICC's administration, focused on the new cocurricular transcripts, which now include in addition to courses taken, extracurricular activities, Bowers said. The Beta Tau Sigma Chapter sponsored a meeting for all Tupelo Campus students to learn from Vice President of Instructional Services Dr. Michelle Clouse the student activities that would qualify for the cocurricular transcript. The chapter also con-

structed a survey for students to see how much they knew about cocurricular transcripts, and the data was shared with ICC's administration.

Upsilon Sigma's awards included Mississippi/Louisiana regional reporter. Emma Mask of Plantersville was the recipient of the Golden Key Award for outstanding chapter leadership, and Matthew Butler of Tupelo, Distinguished Chapter officer.

Sponsors in addition to Bowers and Hukle include Dr. Ira Lindsay Kinard-Jones of Houston, Beta Tau Sigma; and Makela Salmon of Starkville, Upsilon Sigma.

PTK is the international honor society for the two-year college. Its hallmarks are leadership, scholarship, fellowship and service, which are the criteria for selection as recipient of the Golden Key award. Members are afforded opportunities for personal and professional growth and to provide service to the community and society at-large.

Apply now for Indian Delegation before Apr. 26 deadline

ZAMARION JONES
Chieftain Staff

The time is now to apply for ICC's Indian Delegation.

"Indian Delegation is a very prestigious organization at ICC that allows students to cultivate leadership skills by giving tours and visiting high schools to recruit and motivate students to be a part of the college family," according to Kyle Spencer, who should know since he was a delegate when he was a student at ICC.

"I was a delegate during my time at ICC, and I absolutely loved it! I started out as an Electrical Engineering major and thought that was what I wanted to do because I loved math! With being an Indian Delegate and exploring ICC, I decided there was more to life than just math. So, I decided to change my major because I loved meeting new people, giving tours, seeing smiling faces and my overall time here. I practically bleed red and blue!"

Spencer said that he thought he could make a career out of Indian



Kyle Spencer

Delegation, and that's what inspired him to work with the delegates.

Indian Delegates are required to be enrolled in at least 15 credit hours and maintain a 3.5 GPA or better. They must also enroll in a one credit hour class to discuss upcoming events, lead tours and have the opportunity to hear from

speakers. Delegates also must sign up for an office hour n Recruiting to assist college recruiters. According to Michael Holloway, coordinator/sponsor for the Indian Delegation, there are benefits of becoming a delegate such as leadership and communication skills, making connections with ICC's administrators and those in the college district.

Delegates are also awarded a scholarship of \$350 per semester that can extend up to four semesters. Students can access the application on ICC's website, www.iccms.edu/indiandelegation, and are required to submit a résumé after completing the application.

The deadline to apply is Apr. 26. Holloway said there is an interview process in which students must show that they are passionate, hardworking and dedicated. The interview dates are Apr. 30 and May 1.

getinvolved@iccms.edu

Want To Know More?

FULTON CAMPUS

Information on	Contact
Academic Honors	Admissions
Activities Calendar	V.P. of Student Services
Admissions/Records	Admissions
Advanced Placement	V.P. of Instructional Services
Athletics	Athletic Director
Band	Band Director
Books/Supplies	Bookstore
Career Planning	Adviser/Advising Center
Car Registration Decals	Campus Police
Change of Adviser/Major	Advising Center
Change in Curriculum	Adviser/Student Affairs
Counseling	Student Affairs
Counseling (Personal)	V.P. of Student Services
Course Placement	V.P. of Instructional Services
Evaluation of Credits	Admissions
Examinations	Instructor
Faculty Office Hours	Instructor
Graduation Req.	Admissions
I.D. Cards	Student Affairs
Intramurals/Activities	Coor. of Student Activities
Library	Director of Libraries
Log-Ins/PINs	TIS Help Desk
Parking	Campus Police
Part-Time Jobs	Student Affairs
Placement Testing	Student Affairs
Publicity/Publications	Community Relations
Registration	Admissions
Schedule Changes	Adviser
Schedule Planning	Adviser
Scholarships	Financial Aid
Student Aid/Work Study	Financial Aid
Student Government	Coor. of Student Activities
Student Organizations	Sponsors
Summer School	Student Affairs
	V.P. of Instructional Services
Testing (Career)	Career Center
Transcripts	Admissions
Tuition, Fees, Deferrals	Business office
Use of Campus Property	V.P. of Student Services
Veterans Affairs	Financial Aid

TUPELO CAMPUS

Admissions/Records	Student Affairs
Advanced Placement Credit	V.P. Instructional Services
Books and Supplies	Bookstore
Career Planning	Adviser/Career Center
Car Registration/Decals	Campus Police
Counseling	Student Affairs
Evaluation of Credits	Admissions
I.D. Cards	Student Affairs
Job Placement	Career Center
Library	Library
Log-Ins/PINs	TIS Help Desk
Parking	Campus Police
Registration/Early-Reg.	Student Affairs
Schedule Planning	Student Affairs
Scholarships	Financial Aid
Student Activities	Student Affairs
Student Aid	Financial Aid
Student Government	Coor. of Student Activities
Transcripts	Student Affairs
Tuition and Fees	Business office
Veterans Affairs	Financial Aid

BELDEN CENTER

Adult Ed./High School Equivalency	Audra Perry
Career Education	Dylan Baldwin
Continuing Education	Josh Gammill
WIOA	Brad Gates
Workforce	Barry Emison

**Contact information available
at www.iccms.edu
by clicking on the
area of interest or by searching
the college directory
at the same location.**

ICC art students win five awards

Staff Reports

Itawamba Community College's art students brought home five awards from the annual MC-CAIA State Art Competition at Southwest Mississippi Community College, tied for the most with Hinds Community College and Holmes Community College.

They include Keyelle Holder of Fulton, first place, drawing, for "Dinosaur With Lettuce;" Emily Tibbs of Fulton, honorable mention, drawing for "Feline Fantasy" and third place, 3-D design, for the sculpture, "Gorgeous Golden Lady;" Mak Masters of Pontotoc, honorable mention, 3-D design, for the sculpture, "The Wandering;" and Noah Sartin of Tupelo, first place, 3-D Design, for the sculpture, "Faerie Trifeta."

The exhibition will be on display at Southwest through Mar. 27



The work of ICC alumnus Alex Warble will be on display in the W.O. Benjamin Fine Arts Center gallery until Apr. 4.

Work of Memphis artist Alex Warble on display

Staff Reports

A collection of 12 paintings and drawings by Memphis artist Alex Warble is on display at the W.O. Benjamin Fine Arts Center gallery at the Fulton Campus.

The show, entitled "Inventory Systems and the Big Animal Show Plateau," features colorful and whimsical paintings on wood,

drawings and mixed media in Warble's unique style.

His murals can be seen painted on the sides of buildings scattered throughout the Memphis area.

The Fulton native took art classes at ICC, eventually graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in illustration from The

Memphis College of Art in 2006.

The show will be on display until Apr. 4. Gallery hours are 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

For more information, contact, Shawn Whittington at eswhittington@iccms.edu or call 662.862.8301.

ICC's Public Health Technology joins national celebration with local events

Staff Reports

ICC's Public Health Technology program will join those in the profession in celebrating next week as National Public Health Week.

According to program director Cassie Alexander, the theme is "Protecting, Connecting and Thriving: We Are All Public Health." She said the commemoration recognizes the contributions of public health in improving the physical condition of the people of the United States and for ICC's Public Health Technology program, the residents of Mississippi, specifically those in Chickasaw, Itawamba, Lee, Monroe and Pontotoc counties; and achieving health equity.

"Community health workers are the backbone of public health, bridging the gap between healthcare systems and the communities they serve, ensuring that no one is left behind in the pursuit of well-being and equity," said Caroline Newkirk, ICC adjunct instructor and Evaluation Specialist with the Mississippi Public Health Institute. "ICC's Public Health Technology program fills a critical gap in Mississippi by offering a curriculum that prepares its students exceptionally well with the knowledge and skills to be invaluable

community health workers. In a state that is medically underserved, community health workers in Mississippi serve as pivotal links to care, providing health education, monitoring health and ensuring continuity of care to those they serve. ICC's program is to be commended for its commitment to this essential public health profession."

ICC's Public Health Technology is a two-year (four-semester) program which integrates lecture courses with real-life practical experience. Successful completion of the first 30 hours in the selected discipline entitles the student to receive a career certificate and completion of 45 hours, a Technical Certificate. In addition, the program offers an 18-hour Community Health Worker certificate. Graduates earn an Associate of Applied Science degree and have an opportunity to work in collaboration with other healthcare providers and public health officials to improve the health and wellness of the local, state and national citizenry. They can hold positions such as community health worker, insurance navigator, healthcare advocate and healthcare educator, Alexander said.

2022 ICC Public Health Tech-

nology graduate Morgan Windham of Mantachie is currently completing work on her bachelor's degree in the same field in May and is an employee of Mantachie Rural Health Care. "Public Health has shown me that you can impact more than one patient at a time. The entire community is our patient. I love my job and what I do. Public Health has been so beneficial to me, and I feel that I've grown so much."

One of two Mississippi community colleges that offer a degree in Public Health Technology, ICC's program began during the 2016 fall semester. Before it opened, it was one of six recipients in the nation of a League for Innovation in the Community College award. It has been recognized multiple times among the nation's best schools for online degrees and certificates in the healthcare field.

Among the activities to commemorate the week at ICC include the signing of a proclamation by Dr. Jay Allen, president; sponsoring a public health campaign to raise awareness at ICC and hosting a speaker from the Mississippi Public Health Institute to share information regarding not only the national week's focus, but also the importance of the profession.



ICC President Dr. Jay Allen signs a proclamation in celebration of National Public Health Week. Public Health Technology student Tori Coggin and program director Cassie Alexander participate in the special event.



Members of ICC’s Orientation Leaders, who assist with recruiting initiatives, include, from left, Ally Thompson, Brandi Deloach, Natalie Ryals, Braiden Holcombe, Aubrey Eaton, Whitt Willis, Jasmier Coleman, Hayes Merritt, Addison Pletzke, Knox Waterer and Alea Hudson.

ICC ranks among state leaders in full-time spring enrollment

Staff Reports

Itawamba Community College ranks among the leaders in the state in full-time enrollment for the 2024 spring semester, according to figures released by the Mississippi Community College Board.

THE NUMBERS

With spring enrollment at 4,476 at the end of the 10-day reporting period, figures from spring ‘23 to spring ‘24 show a 7 percent increase in head-count and a 9.7 percent increase in FTE with a second-place ranking.

However, ICC has the largest percentage increase than any other community college in the state when reviewing combined FTE increases for fall ‘23 and spring ‘24.

MULTIPLE FACTORS

The increase can be attributed to multiple factors, according to ICC President Dr. Jay Allen, including the addition of state-of-the-art Magnolia Hall for honors students and student leaders, an enhanced emphasis on activities,

expanded free personal orientation sessions and the transition to the schools of approach to enable student connections both to their field of study and their peers.

“This is very exciting news,” Allen said. “The increase in the number of students that ICC is serving is significant because we have additional opportunities to provide a solid educational background and the best start for those in our five-county district and beyond. Because of the dedication of ICC’s faculty and staff, our Board of Trustees and external funding support, we continue to provide an affordable and quality option, which has been documented in the naming of ICC as one of the top 150 community colleges in the nation for 2025, 2023 (one of 25 semifinalists), 2021, 2019, 2017, 2015 and 2013. In addition, the work of our recruiters, enrollment services and community relations team has contributed to this consistent increase in enrollment.”

LOWER TUITION

In comparison to all other higher education options in the state, both public and private, ICC has the second lowest cost of tuition and cost of tuition and fees combined. While the updated enrollment figures include online, academic and career education classes, it does not include workforce totals, which are not measured on a semester basis,” Allen said.

Over the last few years, ICC has offered an enhanced schedule of student activities. “Statistics show that the more students are engaged, the more successful they will be in the classroom,” according to ICC Vice President of Student Services Dr. Brad Boggs. “Having an attractive, comprehensive student activities program plays a major role in recruiting students to attend ICC and subsequently an opportunity to retain students once they enroll.” The renewed emphasis on student activities includes opportuni-

ties for both traditional age students as well as adult learners at all three locations - Fulton, Tupelo and Belden - based on listening to the college’s students and staff and providing programs/events that are of interest to all.

In addition, ICC has transitioned to a Schools of approach to group like majors into a cohort to enable students to connect better with their selected field of study as well as those in the same area, such as academic transfer and career education.

GRADUATE SUCCESS

Allen also noted that the data from the Institutions of Higher Learning shows that ICC produces graduates that when they attend any of the state’s eight universities, they generate the second highest number of bachelor’s degrees by transfer students. They also graduate with a higher GPA than the student who started at the university.

THE BEST

“We are always excited to

hear that more students have chosen to become a member of our special ICC family,” said Michael Holloway, director of Recruitment and Orientation. “I truly believe that ICC provides the best instruction in academic transfer, career education and health sciences programs. We pride ourselves on having something for everyone, both in and outside the classroom. The many resources available to students at the Fulton, Tupelo and Belden locations enhance the overall student experience and help our students achieve success, both in academics and life. From the first time a student arrives to an ICC location or starts one of our fully-online programs to the day they complete their degree or certification and walk across the stage at the Davis Event Center to take the next step in their life journey, ICC provides wraparound services throughout the entire process.”

Donations enhance instruction for ICC Robotics/Automation program

Staff Reports

Significant donations to ICC’s Robotics and Automation Technology program will enhance instruction for students in the career pathway.

On behalf of Red Lion, which is based in York, Pa., Barry Turner of Tupelo, technical business development manager for the company’s industrial data controls in Mississippi donated an edge controller, which will enable students to learn about data acquisition, data monitoring and remote access to computerized industrial automation platforms.

In addition, Kevin McCool, regional manager of Automated Dynamics Corp., presented Banner Sx5-B6 laser scanners. “They will be integrated with

the program’s FANUC robots to create a safety barrier around the work area, said Dr. Doug Ferguson, program director. “Students will use the scanners to learn how to set up and monitor safe workspaces around automated equipment to protect people working around the robotic equipment.”

“ICC appreciates Jack Cameron, owner of Automation Resources of Sherman, for arranging these significant donations and keeping ICC and our students in the forefront of industrial automation data acquisition and safety,” said Dylan Baldwin, ICC dean of Career Education.

The program is located at the Belden Center.



Participants in the contribution of significant equipment to enhance the instruction of the Robotics and Automation Technology program students at Itawamba Community College include, from left, Jack Cameron, Dr. Doug Ferguson, Dylan Baldwin, Kevin McCool and Barry Turner.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

MARCH 25

**Wellness Week begins
Vitalant Blood Drive
Tupelo - Academic
and Student Center Parking Lot
10 a.m.-1 p.m.**

**Grab and Go Wellness Bag
Belden Center
Training Center Lobby
11 a.m-noon**

**Kindness Rocks
Fulton - Crane Pavilion
11 a.m.**

**Beginner Spin with Lexie
Carrie Ball-Williamson
Recreational Center 232
2:30 p.m.**

**Color Dash
Carrie Ball-Williamson
Recreational Center
3:30 p.m.**

**Xtreme Hip Hop Step Aerobics
Fulton - Crane Pavilion
6 p.m.**

**See ICC's calendar
www.iccms.edu
for more Wellness Week
activities.**

MARCH 29, April 1

**Holiday
for Students and Employees**

APRIL 3

**Intramural Flag Football
Practice Football Field - Fulton**

APRIL 8

**Solar Eclipse Viewing Party
Crane Pavilion - Fulton
1:30-2:30 p.m.**

APRIL 9

**Student Government Association
Officer Elections**

APRIL 11

**STEM Club Meeting
STEM Lounge - Fulton
12:10 p.m.**

APRIL 15

**All-American Marching Band
Drumline Virtual Audition
Deadline**

APRIL 16

**Phi Theta Kappa - Tupelo
Chapter Meeting
Student Support Center
Presentation Room (123 G)
12:15 p.m.**

APRIL 29

**Student Awards of Distinction
W.O. Benjamin Fine Arts Center
6 p.m.**

MAY 10

**Commencement Ceremonies
Davis Event Center
Fulton Campus
Multiple Ceremonies**

PTK chapters busy with activities

Both Phi Theta Kappa chapters have been busy with activities this spring, according to Makaela Salmon, director.

Both chapters will send representatives to Catalyst, Apr. 4-7, in Orlando, Fla.

The chapters have hosted several visits with recruiters from various colleges. Each recruiter answers questions, discusses the admission process and gives students information to better prepare for their transition. They have also provided information on scholarships for PTK members and ways to get in-

involved at the university. The visits have given PTK members an opportunity to ask questions and have individual conversations to ensure an easy transfer, Salmon said.

The Fulton chapter, Upsilon Sigma, hosted an honors event, Mar. 8, at the Itawamba Agricultural High School. Christy Griffith, Humanities award winner at ICC, shared how the art and science of ply impacted her choosing a career-based on her love for music. ICC's talent show winner, No Strings Attached, also performed for the high school students at the event, and Juan

Ramirez had a solo. The event gave the IAHS students an opportunity to learn how to get involved when attending college and a chance to speak to clubs and organizations.

Honors in Action will host a second event in April at Dorsey Elementary where first grade students will participate in activities involved in art and science.

Representatives of Blue Mountain Christian University were scheduled to meet with the Upsilon Sigma Chapter today at the Fulton Campus. - **Mackenzie Sneed,** *Chieftain Staff Writer*

ICC offers ACT prep

Itawamba Community College's Continuing Education Department has scheduled several sessions for Preparing for the ACT during the 2024 spring semester.

All meet on Saturdays from 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Math and science sessions include Apr. 6, June 1 and 29. English and reading are offered May 11 and June 15.

ICC's ACT Prep instructors use three intensive classroom review methods in English, reading, science reasoning and math that focus on strategies for improving test-day performance and scores. Those methods include a review of all concepts tested, tips for overcoming test anxiety and guides for "studying smart."

Those who are enrolled have an opportunity to pre-test early and post-test later in the class using full-length ACT practice tests to measure performance and practice for the testing dates. Students must bring their books to all sessions.

The cost is \$50 per session.

Preregistration is required.

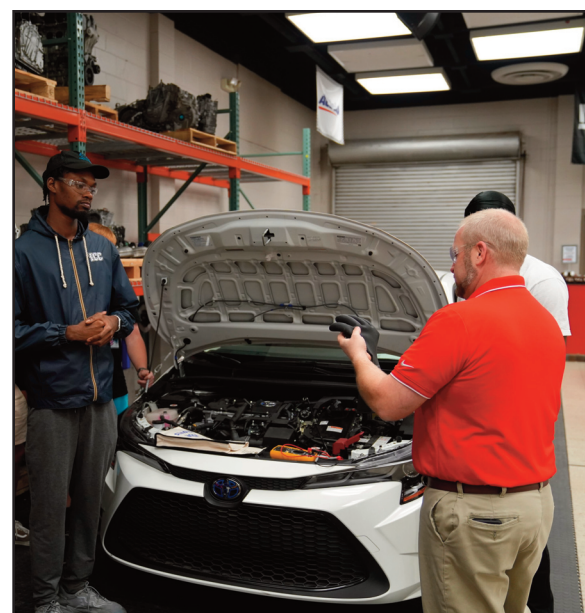
For more information and to register, email continuingeducation@iccms.edu or call 662.407.1500.

All sessions meet at the ICC Belden Center, 3200 Adams Farm Rd.

Register soon

Summer and fall registration for currently-enrolled Honors College begins at 2 p.m., Mar. 25, and allied health students, at 3 p.m.

Currently-enrolled freshmen begin at 7:30 a.m., Mar. 28, and readmission and transfer students, Apr. 10.



ICC's Automotive Technology program director Brad Crowder shares information with his students at the Tupelo Campus.

ICC commemorates Career Education month

Itawamba Communitis College joined two-year institutions across the United States in commemorating February as Career Education Month.

"Career education is a major part of the solution to such economic and workforce issues, including high school dropout rates, a weakened economy, global competitiveness and massive layoffs," said Dylan Baldwin, dean of Career Education at ICC. "Career education associate's degrees can pay \$10,000 more per year than those in other fields, sometimes even more than bachelor's degrees, while limiting student debt."

According to the latest figures available from the Association for Career and Technical Education, 23,062 postsecondary career education participants in Mississippi are developing technical, academic and employability skills and engaging in work-based experiences with industry partners. "These youth and adult learners enrolled in career education programs are more engaged, earn industry-recognized credentials and have rewarding and family-sustaining careers," the ACTE noted. In addition, there were 16,064 postsecondary credentials earned during the same time period.

Career education programs, such as advanced manufacturing; agriculture, food and beverage; distribution and logistics and forestry, construction and information technology can fill skills gaps, particularly in Mississippi's key industries. Fifty-seven percent of jobs in Mississippi require skills training, more education than high school, but less than a four-year degree, and only 50 percent of the state's workers are trained at this level, the ACTE report continued.

ICC's career education programs include Automotive, Business and Marketing Management, Construction Management, Criminal Justice, Diesel Equipment, Early Childhood Education, Electrical, Forestry, Heating and Air Conditioning, Hospitality Management, Industrial Maintenance, Information Systems (Computer Networking and Programming options), Paralegal, Precision Machining, Robotics and Automation, Toyota AMT and Welding and Cutting. In addition, 16 pathways equip students for early workforce entry. - *Staff Reports*

THE NEWS



FYI

MAKE A NOTE OF IT

JUST A REMINDER...

Review lockdown procedures

ICC's faculty, staff and students are urged to review campus lockdown procedures.

"The procedures are meant to be very simple because at the point of a lockdown, the major concern is the safety of all of the individuals in the campus community," said Dr. Brad Boggs, vice president of student services.

Notifications will be communicated via ICC ALERT, email and the Emergency Information Web page.

Upon notification of campus lockdown, everyone must react immediately.

The procedures include

- 1) Lock all doors and windows.
- 2) Close all blinds.
- 3) Turn off lights.
- 4) Use room furnishings to barricade doors and as protection.
- 5) Everyone should sit on the floor, away from doors and windows.
- 6) Make no noise.
- 7) Remain in lockdown until it is cleared with a notice via ICC ALERT or the police/administrator gives te ALL CLEAR code.

In addition, these are procedures in the event of severe weather conditions or evacuation.

Individuals should check ICC's website, www.iccms.edu, for information. It's located under Campus Safety on the home page.

Sign up for ICC ALERT

ICC provides a mass notification system called ICC ALERT.

Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in the free service.

ICC ALERT has been utilized for inclement weather situations when classes and offices were closed due to snow and icing conditions and when storms threatened

the area.

To sign up to receive emergency messages through ICC ALERT: 1) Log on to the myTribe portal using your name and password; 2) Click ICC ALERT system in the link section on the bottom right; 3) Log in with your same username and password as myTribe to add/update your information.

For assistance with technical issues, contact the TIS Help Desk at (662) 862-8295 or via email at helpdesk@iccms.edu.

Litter-free

Everyone is reminded to use trash receptacles for litter. It's up to all of us to show our pride by ensuring that all three locations are litter-free.

No noise

Unnecessary noise is banned at Itawamba Community College, including loud music, yelling and screaming.

Students who are found guilty of noise violations will be fined, and the fine will double with each successive violation.

Campus Police

ICC-Belden...662.687.2752

ICC-Fulton...662.687.2750

ICC-Tupelo...662.687.2751

For more information about ICC emergency procedures...

www.iccms.edu



ICC Construction Management program director Scott Emison teaches a class recently at the Fulton Campus.

ICC enters into partnership with Southern Miss for 2+2 program in Construction Management

Staff Reports

Itawamba Community College has entered into a partnership with the University of Southern Mississippi for a 2+2 program to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Construction Management.

ICC's Construction Management Technology is an instructional program designed to prepare technicians for employment within the construction industries and firms in mid-level-management operations as estimators, planners, project managers, layout specialists or other construction opportunities. Upon completion of the two-year curriculum, students are awarded the Associate of Applied Science degree.

According to Scott Emison, instructor and director of ICC's Construction Management Technology program, it allows his students to transfer to the University of Southern Mississippi to complete degree work in two years.

"This collaboration is a new and slightly more direct route for ICC's students to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in construction management at Southern Miss," Emison said. "This 2+2 option al-

lows our ICC students the opportunity to fully transfer credit of 60 hours and to seamlessly enter the third year cohort with the rest of the USM-BCM track students. The four semesters at USM can be completed 100 percent online or on their Hattiesburg campus, which affords our graduated the option to seek full-time employment while earning their undergraduate degree. I am excited about this partnership with USM and its alignment with our program's curriculum. At ICC, we strive to prepare students for a successful career in the construction field through a hybrid lecture, lab and field experience, and this collaboration with USM presents a wonderful opportunity for our students to enhance their learning experience and employability in the industry."

"In addition to facilitating a smoother transfer process, we are delighted to announce the establishment of merit-based and financial need-based scholarships specifically designed to support transfer students continuing their studies at Southern Miss," said Dr. Emre Bayraktar, professor and director of the School of Construction and Design at USM.

"Our dedication to providing a well-rounded and accessible education is reflected in these scholarship opportunities, which aim to recognize and support the academic achievements and financial needs of our incoming students. We look forward to providing a supportive and enriching journey for all students involved. The collaboration between our programs holds great promise, and we are excited about the positive impact it will have on the academic and professional growth of our students."

A degree in construction management teaches graduates how to plan and manage the workflow, personnel, equipment and processes required to safely and ethically construct a project on time and within budget using the best practices and current technology.

Southern Miss program highlights include online option, no out-of-state tuition, accreditation by the American Council for Construction Education, annual Construction and Design Career Expo and scholarship opportunities available for both online and on-campus students, Emison said.

ICC selects creative writing winners to advance to state level

Staff Reports

Itawamba Community College has selected winners of its creative writing competition, and they will be honored during Sigma Kappa Delta's spring induction ceremony on the Fulton Campus.

They include

Mooreville - Carmen Birmingham, second place, essay, for "Anne Bradstreet's Poems Upon a Closer Look;" Alexandria Chris-

tian, second place, poetry, for "Counting Stars;"

Okolona - Tytianna Brooks, first place, short story, for "Don't Go;"

Pontotoc - Anna Thomas, first place, poetry, for "Coin Purse;"

Saltillo - Lauren Paul, second place, short story, for "To Everything I Had Once Loved;"

Smithville - Blake Ligon, second place, drama, for "Happy Anniversary;"

Tupelo

- Luke Nichols, first place, drama, for "AD&D 5e Story - Chapter 1;" and James Ross, first place, essay, for "Analysis of the Portrayal of Death in the Poem 'Because I Could Not Stop for Death;" by Emily Dickinson.

Their work was entered into the Mississippi Community College Creative Writing Association competition, and winners were noti-

fied last week.

State-level winners will receive certificates and a copy of Writer, which publishes the student winners, at the in-person MCCCWA conference, Apr. 12, at the Hinds Community College Rankin Campus.

At the conference, the statewide first, second and third place winners will receive monetary prizes of \$100, \$60 and \$40 respectively.

ICC...The BEST!





Itawamba Community College Diagnostic Medical Sonography program director Amanda Stone works with students recently at the Tupelo Campus.

DMS program receives accreditation

Staff Reports

Itawamba Community College's newest health science program, Diagnostic Medical Sonography, has been awarded accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs.

WHAT IS ACCREDITATION?

"With this national accreditation, our students are eligible to obtain credentials in obstetrics and gynecologic sonography and abdominal extended sonography by the time of graduation," said Amanda Stone, program director. "Upon graduation, students are eligible to be licensed registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographers entering the workforce. This is a huge accomplishment for our program. We are one of only two Diagnostic Medical Sonography programs accredited in the state. We have worked tirelessly with the help and support of the community, especially our clinical affiliates, toward this goal at ICC since the beginning of the program."

ICC'S DMS PROGRAM

DMS combines an in-person boot camp/lab session at the beginning of both the fall and spring semesters, clinical rotations and

online didactic courses. Graduates of the one-year (three-semester program) earn an Associate of Applied Science degree. The program format offers an opportunity for potential students from outside ICC's service area to participate as long as clinical sites are approved.

WHAT DO THEY DO?

Diagnostic Medical Sonographers are highly-skilled healthcare professionals who uses high frequency sound waves, also known as ultrasound, to produce diagnostic images of the internal structures of the human body. Sonographers work closely with physicians and radiologists, who interpret the ultrasound and related diagnostic procedures. They work in hospitals, clinics, physicians' offices, women's health centers and pediatric care centers.

"We are excited to earn this accreditation status for ICC's Diagnostic Medical Sonography program," said Dean of Health Science Instruction Tonya Vaughn. "Reopening this program in the fall of 2022 as a suggestion from our advisory committee led to the identification of a scarcity of programs in the state. This innovative program serves both new

students as well as current sonographers who want additional certifications."

THE NOTIFICATION

ICC President Dr. Jay Allen received official notification of the accreditation in a letter dated Mar. 18. "The commission recognizes your organization's commitment to continuous quality improvement in health professions education, as demonstrated by your participation in CAAHEP programmatic accreditation," said Dr. Donald Balasa, president of the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs, who sent the notification letter. The Joint Review Committee on Education in Diagnostic Medical Sonography conducts comprehensive and annual reviews of the program's compliance with the Standards and submits recommendations regarding accreditation status to CAAHEP. JRC-DMS monitors the program's outcomes through its annual report and supporting documentation. An onsite visit was conducted earlier this year.

The next evaluation of the program is scheduled to occur no later than 2029.



Itawamba Community College is an open admission, comprehensive, publicly supported two-year institution primarily serving Chickasaw, Itawamba, Lee, Monroe and Pontotoc counties, while also being responsive to the instructional and economic development needs of the region.

Itawamba Community College fulfills its mission through 1) College-parallel, technical and career programs to prepare students to transfer or enter the workforce; 2) Continuing education and workforce pathways for individuals striving for professional growth or personal enrichment; 3) Strategic partnerships to provide student opportunities, meet business and industry needs and promote economic development; 4) Adult education programs committed to increasing the literacy level of the adult population, providing self-improvement opportunities, workforce readiness and/or high school equivalency; 5) Resources, including financial, physical and technological to advance educational purpose as well as traditional and online instructional services, student support services and business management; 6) Recruitment and employment of qualified personnel as well as provide ongoing opportunities for leadership growth and success in educational, career and personal goals.

Candidates for admission to academic and career education programs may be admitted by diploma - students are required to present an official transcript from a high school accredited by the appropriate state or regional accreditation association; by completing the appropriate number of Carnegie units; by successfully completing an acceptable high school equivalency test - students are required to have an official copy of the high school equivalency transcript mailed to the Director of Admissions; by advanced standing (college transfer students). Students graduating without a regular diploma (Occupational Diploma or Special Education Diploma) must successfully complete an acceptable high school equivalency test or qualify under a Mississippi Ability to Benefit State Process in order to be eligible for admission to Itawamba Community College. Some career education programs may have selective criteria for admission.

Itawamba Community College is an equal opportunity institution. The College strictly prohibits discrimination in its educational programs and activities, employment practices and admissions processes on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, ethnicity, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran or other status protected by applicable law. For more information, contact the Vice President of Student Services, 602 West Hill Street, Fulton, MS 38843, 662.862.8271 or email TitleIXCoordinator@iccms.edu.

In compliance with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Itawamba Community College makes available its curricular and extracurricular programs and its facilities to every qualified person regardless of race, sex, color, creed, national origin or disability.

Itawamba Community College is accredited by the Southern Association of Community Colleges to award associate degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404.670.4500 for questions about the accreditation of Itawamba Community College.

**www.iccms.edu
662.862.8000**



Visiting IAC

Each year, ICC sponsors the Mississippi Children's Museum at Itawamba Attendance Center thanks to funding from the Mississippi Space Grant Consortium. During STEM Day, the children constructed vehicles, experimented with robots and computing systems and built structures. - Photos furnished



The 2023-24 Itawamba Community College Hall of Fame includes front, from left, Aubrey Eaton, Jordan Allen, Jolie Bishop, Gabriella Pearce, Sara Kitchens, Michaela Heitger; back, William Gibson, Ally Thompson, Lucy Vaughn, Addison Pletzke, Lexie Kent and Whit Willis.

12 sophomores selected to ICC Hall of Fame '24

Staff Reports

Twelve Itawamba Community College sophomores have been selected as members of the prestigious Hall of Fame for 2023-24.

They include Jolie Anna Bishop, Ally Thompson, both of Amory; Addison Pletzke of Clinton; Jordan Allen of Jackson; Whitt Willis of Madison; Michaela Heitger of Mooreville; Lucy Vaughn of Nettleton; Lexie Kent of New Albany; Sara Francis Kitchens of Pontotoc; William Gibson, Gabrielle Pearce, both of Tupelo; and Aubrey Eaton of Woodland.

JORDAN ALLEN

At ICC, Allen is a member of the women's soccer team, STEM Club, Trading Post, Phi Theta Kappa and Honors College; '23 Orientation Leader; Instructional Support Leader and Chemistry II tutor for NASA (Mississippi Space Grant Consortium). Her other activities include assistance in the nursery and singing in the choir at New Jerusalem Church in Jackson. She will transfer to Mississippi College where she plans to major in biology/pre-medicine with a minor in communications. She is the daughter of Althea Allen.

JOLIE BISHOP

Bishop's activities have included All-American Band; Color Guard captain; Indian Delegation president; Social Media Ambassador; Student Government Association secretary; Orientation Leader; and member of Phi Theta Kappa, Sigma Kappa Delta, Student Activities Board, ICC Trading Post team, Wesley Foundation (Lead Team and Praise Band) and Baptist Student Union (Praise Band). She was also selected as sophomore Homecoming Maid. Bishop, who is majoring in Allied Health, plans to apply for ICC programs in that area. Her other activities are Amory Food Pantry and Nettleton Crosspointe Church, where she participates in the Praise Band. She is the daughter of Chad and Mary Bishop.

AUBREY EATON

Eaton is a member of ICC's Indian Delegation, Honors College, Sigma Kappa Delta, Educators Rising, Fashion Tribe, Social Media Ambassadors and Political Science Club; Phi Theta

Kappa vice president; Instructional Support Leader; Orientation Leader; BSU Lead Team; Trading Post executive chair; and Chickasaw County Representative for the Student Government Association. Her honors are 2023 Homecoming Court sophomore maid and Dean's List for two semesters. Eaton plans to transfer to the University of Mississippi to complete the bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and work toward the master's degree and dyslexia certification. She is an active member of Arbor Grove Baptist Church where she serves on the mission committee. Her parents are Steve and Terri Eaton.

WILLIAM GIBSON

Gibson's activities at ICC have included president of Phi Theta Kappa, vice president and Itawamba County Representative for the Student Government Association, Orientation Leader and member of Sigma Kappa Delta. He was also runner-up for Mr. ICC. He attends the Orchard. Gibson plans to transfer to Mississippi State University where he will continue his major in Accounting and International Business. He is the son of Karen Gibson and Billy Gibson.

MICHAELA HEITGER

At ICC, Heitger is a member of the Advanced Manufacturing Technician program at Toyota Motor Manufacturing Mississippi, where she hopes to be employed. She is majoring in Industrial Maintenance Technology. Her honors include both President's and Dean's lists. Heitger is children's pastor at Brush Arbor Church, director of the Acting Academy program and member of the Mooreville-Eggville Volunteer Fire Department.

LEXIE KENT

Kent, who is majoring in Radiologic Technology, works at the North Mississippi Medical Center Tupelo as an intern in that field. Among her ICC activities are women's tennis team, Phi Theta Kappa and Sigma Kappa Delta honor societies, and her honors have included 2021 ICC sophomore Homecoming maid, 2021 Most Beautiful Pageant first alternate and 2021 and 2023 fall President's List. Kent was the 2022 Miss New Albany Hospitality and placed in the top 10 at the state

pageant. She is an active member of Hillcrest Baptist Church where she volunteers for Tim Tebow's Night to Shine. Kent plans to pursue completion of a degree in Nuclear Medicine Technology following completion of the Radiologic Technology program. She is the daughter of Jonathan and Amanda Kent.

SARA FRANCIS KITCHENS

Kitchens, who is majoring in Associate Degree Nursing, is president of Alpha Delta Nu, Nursing class representative and a member of Phi Theta Kappa. Her honors include President's and Dean's lists, recipient of the Dr. Joseph Dzikielewski Memorial Nursing Foundation Scholarship and the Advancing Mississippi's Healthcare Workforce Bower Foundation award. Kitchens is also a member of the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church. She plans to earn the Bachelor of Nursing degree from Mississippi University for Women and work in the critical care unit at North Mississippi Medical Center. She is the daughter of April Kitchens.

GABRIELLE PEARCE

Pearce is majoring in Construction Management, and she plans to be a project manager. Her other activities include the Tupelo First Baptist Church and an internship with Century. She is the daughter of Tim Pearce, Johnna Pearce and the late Angelia Steele Pearce.

ADDISON PLETZKE

At ICC, Pletzke's activities have included Phi Theta Kappa member and officer, Baptist Student Union Lead Team, Student Activities Board, Honors College, women's soccer, Orientation Leader and Fashion Tribe. Her honors are President's list, Dean's list, ACT Scholarship and AT&T Endowment Foundation Scholarship. Pletzke attends the First Baptist Church in Clinton where she worked and taught at DiscipleNow and Vacation Bible School. She plans to transfer to Mississippi College where she will major in pre-Occupational Therapy, earn the bachelor's degree and begin the Occupational Therapy program at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. Her parents are Angie Pletzke and Michael Pletzke.

ALLY THOMPSON

Thompson is majoring in Exercise Science at ICC, where she is vice president of leadership for Phi Theta Kappa. Orientation Leader, Instructional Support team member, Fashion Tribe executive, Trading Post executive and a member of the Honors College and Indian Delegation. She attends Zion Assembly Church in Amory, where she is involved in worship and teaching Sunday school. She plans to transfer to Mississippi State University where she will pursue an undergraduate degree in Kinesiology and continue work toward a graduate degree in Physical Therapy at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. She is the daughter of Mandy and Allen Thompson.

LUCY VAUGHN

At ICC, Vaughn is president of both the Tupelo Campus Student Government Association and Indian Delegation. Her honors include sophomore homecoming maid. A Hospital Administration major, Vaughn plans to transfer to Mississippi State University to major in Hospital/Business Administration. She is the daughter of Micheal and Jessica Vaughn.

WHITT WILLIS

At ICC, Willis is president of the Student Government Association and a member of the Academic Calendar, Financial Aid and Curriculum committees and Student Activities Board; Orientation Leader, Food Pantry Representative, Natural Science Instructional Support Tutor; and a member of the STEM Club, PEAK Club, Humanities Club, Honors College, Phi Theta Kappa and Sigma Kappa Delta and former Student Activities student worker. His honors include Mr. ICC 2024 and President's List. Willis volunteers at the University of Mississippi Medical Center and for the Jackson Free Clinic. He plans to transfer to Mississippi State University to earn a degree in microbiology and to enter medical school to prepare for a career as a Family Medicine Physician. He is the son of Walt and Susan Willis.

ICC Athletics on the Move

CAMPUS SPORTS

CHIEFTAIN/Page 12.....March 25, 2024



Jamyia Bowen



Arianna Durrell



Bryson Dawkins

Trio of ICC basketball players earn All-MACCC honors

Staff Reports

Three Itawamba Community College basketball players earned All-Mississippi Association of Community Colleges Conference honors.

Arianna Durrell and Jamyia Bowen were selected from the Lady Indians squad that went 23-6 on the season and advanced to the semifinals of the NJCAA Region 23 Tournament.

Durrell, the Lady Indians' leading

scorer, was named Second Team after she finished the season averaging 9.8 points per game and scoring 283 total points. The Clinton native recorded 58 rebounds, 23 assists, 41 steals and six blocks.

Bowen, a native of Shannon, was named Honorable Mention. She averaged 7.9 points per game and scored 228 total points. Her record also in-

cludes 137 rebounds, 11 assists, 17 steals and 48 blocks.

The duo tied for a team-best 16 points each in the Lady Indians' 79-56 win over Calhoun Community College.

Bryson Dawkins of Ozark, Ala. helped lead the men's basketball team to its second consecutive 20+ win season and the NJCAA Region 23 Tournament. He was the Indians' top scorer

this season, averaging 14.5 points per game and scoring 426 total points, 20 or more in seven games. His top scoring performance was in ICC's game at Mississippi Gulf Coast when he dropped 27 on the Bulldogs. Dawkins finished the season with 181 rebounds, 97 assists, 50 steals and 20 blocks while securing five double-double performances.

Lady Indians advance to Region 23 semifinals

Staff Reports

ICC's Lady Indians cruised past Jones College in the opening round of the NJCAA Region 23 Tournament, 54-73, at the Davis Event Center, Mar. 9. Addison Howell led ICC offensively with 14 points.

They advanced to the Region 23 semifinals with a 51-47 win over host Coahoma, Mar. 11. D'Nayia Williams recorded 10 points and 10 rebounds to se-

cure her fourth double-double of her ICC career.

The Lady Indians lost a heartbreaker to Mississippi Gulf Coast's Lady Bulldogs to end their season in overtime, 71-67. Jestiny Dixon led all scorers with 18, followed by Ayonna Naylor with 12; Allie Beckley, 9; and D'Naylah Williams, 8.

ICC's men fell to the Pearl River Wildcats in the opening round of the NJCAA Region 23 Tourna-

ment, Mar. 9.

Chris Minton and AJ Dent led ICC offensively with 15 points each. Dent also had a team-best 10 rebounds to secure a double-double performance.

It was Coach Grant Pate's last game as the head coach of the Indians basketball team. They finished with an overall record of 22-8 while going 8-6 in MACCC play.

ICC Wellness Week starts today at all three locations

SHELBY FRANKS
Chieftain Staff

Itawamba Community College is preparing to kick off its annual Wellness Week today.

ITS FOCUS

"Wellness Week is when we focus on mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health," said Student Activities Coordinator Maggie Wilkinson. It runs through Thursday.

Students as well as faculty and staff can get involved in many activities during the week, Wilkinson said.

STARTING TODAY

The traditional Color Dash and Field Day is today at 3 p.m. on the Fulton Campus. and March 27 on the band practice field.

Other activities include a blood drive today from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Tupelo Campus; Scream It Out on

March 26 from 1-1:15 p.m. at the Fulton Campus Library; Library Trivia Night on March. 27 at the Fulton Campus and a Pull-Up/Push-Up competition on March 27 at 1:30 p.m. on the Fulton Campus.

The Library will also be featuring wellness books all week, according to Wilkinson.

PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS

Various college departments also will be participating in Wellness Week, including the Library, Housing, the Fitness Center and Student Activities. "It's an opportunity for faculty, staff and students to check-in with their own wellness and remember why it's important," Wilkinson emphasized.

For more information, email getinvolved@iccms.edu or visit www.iccms.edu/events for a complete listing.

Wellness Week

Events

March 25-28

Kindness ROCKS!

Wellness Bags

Scream It Out

Color Dash

DIY Trail Mix

Trivia Time

Pull-Up/Push-Up Competition

Field Day

Visit www.iccms.edu/events for a complete listing!

ICC FITNESS CENTER

Get involved!

Tribe talk

ELIJAH COLEMAN
Sports Editor

In case you missed it, the nation celebrated National Girls and Women's Sports Day. It's an annual day of observance and celebration that inspires girls and women to play and be active and to realize their full power

It is a day to celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of female athletes in the world of sports. It is a time to recognize the hard work, commitment and dedication that these women put into their athletic endeavors and to acknowledge the barriers that they have overcome to achieve success in their chosen sports.

We honored those women on that day in February who have made a significant impact on the world of sports, both as athletes and as trailblazers paving the way for future generations. This day serves as a reminder of the importance of gender equality in sports and the need for continued support and recognition of female athletes.

Itawamba Community College continues to support its female athletes. ICC has a long history of excellence in athletics with numerous women's sports teams that have achieved great success both on and off the field.



Since ICC's Athletic Hall of Fame began in 1989, 11 women athletes have been inducted: Sarah Duncan, Dotsie Williamson, Bonnie Sappington, Jeanie Dale (basketball); Nanci Gray, basketball and basketball coach; Missy Farrar, basketball and softball; Helen Logan, basketball and supporter; Linda Partlow, tennis, softball coach; Carrie Ball-Williamson, basketball and softball coach; Dr. Ketra Armstrong, basketball; and Elaine Fagan Battigan, tennis.

The college is committed to providing opportunities for women to excel in sports and foster a culture of inclusivity and empowerment for all athletes.

ICC's student-athletes and coaches, both past and present, have demonstrated incredible skills, determination and perseverance in their respective sports. From basketball to softball to tennis and volleyball, these women have dedicated themselves to their craft, pushing themselves to be the best that they and their teams can be. Their hard work and dedication haven't gone unnoticed, as they have consistently brought home championships, broken records and earned accolades for their achievements.

As the nation honored women in sports in February, it's a reminder that we should be mindful of their accomplishments every single day. Let us continue to recognize, support and uplift these women as they continue to inspire us with their talent, passion and dedication to the world of sports.

Women's sports have come a long way, but there is still work to be done to ensure that all female athletes have equal opportunities and recognition in the athletic world.

Let us use this as a reminder to continue to advocate for gender equality in sports and to celebrate the amazing accomplishments of ICC's student-athletes, both on and off the field, court and pitch. ICC appreciates you!

ROLL TRIBE!



Springing into spring

Spring has finally sprung, and with it, the diamonds, courts and courses are in full use by the baseball, softball, tennis and golf teams.

Itawamba Community College Sports...

ON THE SCHEDULE

BASEBALL

3.26	Northeast	3/6 p.m.
3.29	@Southwest	2/5 p.m.
4.02	@Snead State	2/4 p.m.
4.06	Copiah-Lincoln	2/5 p.m.
4.09	@ East Miss.	2/5 p.m.
4.13	East Central	2/5 p.m.
4.17	@Miss. Delta	1/4 p.m.
4.20	@Hinds	2/5 p.m.
4.24	Northwest	3/6 p.m.
4.27	Jones	2/5 p.m.

GOLF

3.26	@Meridian	TBA
4.8-9	@MACCC Tournament	

SOFTBALL

3.26	@Northeast	5/7 p.m.
3.28	Southwest	1/3 p.m.
4.01	Calhoun	1/3 p.m.
4.02	@Calhoun	1/3 p.m.
4.06	@Co-Lin	2/4 p.m.
4.09	East Miss.	2/4 p.m.
4.13	@East Central	2/4 p.m.
4.17	Miss. Delta	1/3 p.m.

4.20	Hinds	1/3 p.m.
4.21	La State-Eunice	2/4 p.m.
	@ William Carey	
4.24	@Northwest	3/5 p.m.
4.27	@Jones	3.5 p.m.

TENNIS

3.26	@Northeast	11 a.m.
3.29	Jones	2 p.m.
4.02	Meridian	TBA

For the most up-to-date schedules, LetsGoICC.com.

Follow ICC athletics...LetsGoICC.com
or on Twitter...@LetsGoICC



Most Beautiful '24 Laney Howell

Laney Howell of Amory, center, was selected Itawamba Community College's Most Beautiful 2024 at the conclusion of the Feb. 16 pageant at the Fulton Campus. Alternates, from left, include Nealee Turner of Tupelo, first; Anna Beth Brown of Ripley, second; Howell; Reese Griffith of Amory, third; and Alivia Tipton of Fulton, fourth. All winners receive a scholarship presented by the Itawamba Community College Foundation, Inc. The event was sponsored by ICC's The Global Experience. - Photo by C.J. Adams.

ICC + TPSD partnership = Middle College success

Staff Reports

Three years ago, neither Itawamba Community College nor the Tupelo Public School District could have imagined the magnitude of the success of its Middle College partnership.

The accelerated journey to simultaneously achieving diplomas from both institutions has grown significantly, according to Brittany Terrell, transition counselor. "When reflecting on the past three years of the Middle College program, I am proud of the success these students have shown. I have witnessed students come out of their shell and find confidence in their academic abilities. Not only have they blossomed academically, but they are heavily involved with ICC's extracurriculars, clubs and organizations."

Jay Salters of Tupelo, who received both his Tupelo High School and Itawamba Community College diplomas last spring, was president of the Tupelo Campus Student Government Association, one of only 12 members selected by faculty and staff members to the prestigious Hall of Fame and a member of the ICC Indian Delegation and a THS Ambassador. He was invited into membership in both Phi Theta Kappa (ICC) and the National Honor Society (THS). However, he's not the only example.

Austin Acosta is currently a senior majoring in engineering at Mississippi State University, where he transferred in 2022 with two years of engineering classes from ICC. Originally from Mexico, Acosta and his family moved to the United States in search of better op-

portunities. Encouraged by his family to apply for the Middle College program while in high school, Astin became a first-generation college student. At first, he was undecided about his decision and intimidated about being a college student while still in high school. However, he flourished during his time at ICC, where he was selected as a tutor for ICC's Instruc-



Tupelo Public School District students take a break from Middle College at ICC to pose for a photo. - Photo courtesy of Ryan Coon, TPSD

tional Support Team and was awarded the Phi Theta Kappa transfer scholarship to MSU. "Middle College helped me network with instructors and other peers in my major," Acosta said. "I excelled academically because I learned how to step out of my comfort zone to form study groups with my peers and ask for help from my instructors. The sciences I took at ICC were demanding, and I had to learn how to study at the collegiate level rather than a traditional high school course. I was able to carry these tools to MSU, and I am grateful for everything I learned while at ICC."

Through the innovative Middle College, students can simultaneously earn their high school diploma and 60 plus hours of college credit. "It is truly a partnership between ICC and TPSD, a collaboration that focuses on the students and how we can work to best prepare them for the next level, whether that is a senior college or directly to the workforce," said ICC Pres-

ident Dr. Jay Allen.

Terrell said that students are placed in a more supportive and transitional environment that bridges the gap to higher education. With the support of ICC and THS personnel, students learn soft skills such as communicating with instructors, time management skills and responsibility that are imperative for overall preparedness at the university level. "This program encourages independence, dedication toward the students' educational interests and opportunities for career exploration as well as offers opportunities to build

their résumé with club involvement. Lastly, participants are exposed to more scholarship opportunities at the university level through different organizations offered at ICC, including Phi Theta Kappa.

"This is a great opportunity for our students to get ahead and graduate high school with two years of college under their belts," said Dr. Rob Picou, superintendent of the Tupelo Public School District. "The Middle College isn't designed for every student, but for those who qualify, it's the perfect model to graduate high school and enter college as a junior."

At its inception in 2020, Middle College consisted of 10 students. There has been a significant increase of students interested in the program, and currently there are 40 participants. Prior to their junior year, THS students must have a 3.0 grade point average or higher, ACT math score of 19 and English score of 17.

"The obvious advantages of the Middle College program include college credits, time and cost savings and bridging the gap from high school to college," Terrell said. Participants are introduced to the academic rigor, expectations and responsibilities of higher education. Students thoroughly enjoy taking college-level courses tailored to their individual interests and are able to explore potential career paths, thus making more informed decisions about their future. They gain a sense of self-confidence, independence and personal growth through this process.